

THE CLAIMS:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An electronic system for purchasing merchandise goods and services online using a computer having a display device, comprising:

means for selecting and purchasing merchandise, by a user, online; and

an interactive wizard guide, selectively and optionally deployed by a user, for making online merchandise recommendations and computer-assisted selections tailored to said user, said interactive wizard guide comprising:

means for prompting a user to specify preferences regarding at least one type of merchandise or service of interest to a said user, said prompting means includes means for prompting by having the user to answer a plurality of questions, the means then retrieving data responsive to the indicated preferences from at least one database and displaying said data on a display device wherein the system uses predetermined intelligence rules together with said preferences input by the user to search merchandise databases and select and recommend merchandise and accessories to the user.

means for receiving the preferences and answers to the plurality of questions to create a user profile,

means for searching in and retrieving data from at least one database using predetermined intelligence rules together with said user profile to determine said recommendations and said selections of said merchandise and accessories to said merchandise,

means, in response to said retrieving means, for displaying on said display device,
said recommendations and said selections of said merchandise and said accessories, and
means for overriding said interactive wizard guide.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, wherein: ~~the means are comprised of:~~

said prompting means comprises:

a questionnaire database that prompts the user to answer a plurality of questions to specify the user preferences with regard to the at least one type of merchandise;

~~a merchandise database having textual and graphical data regarding the at least one type of merchandise, the merchandise database using said artificial intelligence rules to match the merchandise with the accessories and having links to databases for other types of merchandise;~~

said searching and retrieving means comprises:

a search engine using comparison functions, said artificial intelligence rules and user input rules;

said wizard guide further comprising:

a merchandise database having textual and graphical data regarding the at least one type of merchandise, the merchandise database using said artificial intelligence rules to match the merchandise with the accessories and having links to databases for other types of merchandise;

a layout and schematics program for preparing and displaying a floor plan depicting merchandise selected by the user, wherein the dimensions and other architectural features of the floor plan are provided by the user;

a models database having images of models;

an animation and morphing program for providing image and motion creation and morphing to models selected from the model database by the user, wherein the selected models wear merchandise selected by the user, the user able to alter the models and the models' features;

a temporary working database in which the user works while using the system;
and

a personal folder database for storing the data from the temporary working database and said user profile.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, wherein the user specifies the user preferences by either checking at least one box in front of a possible ~~choices~~ choice or ~~elinking~~ clicking on a text string representing that choice.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, ~~wherein the system provides the user with the names of a plurality of vendors for the merchandise specified by the user.~~ further comprising:

means for providing the user with names of a plurality of vendors for the merchandise recommended to the user.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 4, ~~wherein after the user selects a vendor, the system asks the user to specify additional information regarding the products of the vendor selected by the user.~~ further comprising:

means for enabling the user to select a vendor from the plurality of vendors;

means, response to the selected vendor, for prompting the user to specify additional information regarding products of the selected vendor.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, further comprising: ~~wherein based on specifications provided by the user, the system prepares and displays~~ means for preparing and displaying, based on specifications provided by the user, a recommended floor plan showing each item of merchandise selected by the user.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 6, further comprising: ~~wherein the system prompts~~ means for prompting the user to examine and specify specifications and configurations for each merchandise item.

8. (ORIGINAL) The system according to Claim 7, wherein the user uses an input device to click on an individual item of merchandise shown on the display device to determine which goods to configure.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, wherein ~~the system retrieves data in response to the user specified preferences from a first database and~~ stores the retrieved data is stored in a ~~second~~ local database which is smaller than the ~~first~~ the at least one database, thereby enabling the user to interact with the system without having to traffic data through a network and thus at a faster speed than would be possible if the user had to traffic data through the network.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, wherein the prompting means includes ~~system uses~~ menus and data entry tables to solicit said preferences from the user.

11. (CANCELLED)

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, wherein ~~the system~~ the interactive wizard guide includes: means for selecting ~~selects~~ a model from a model database and ~~morphs~~ morphing the model using specifications provided by the user.

13. (ORIGINAL) The system according to Claim 12, wherein ~~the system~~ the interactive wizard guide uses an animation graphics composition morphing program to cause the model to be animated and to engage in a full range of movement displayed on the display device.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, wherein the ~~system~~ interactive wizard guide includes both inclusion and exclusion mechanisms to assist the user in making preference selections.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, wherein the ~~system~~ the interactive wizard guide includes an automated select all feature wherein all possible preferences are automatically included unless excluded by the user.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, wherein at any stage of interaction with the system, an array of recommendations can be presented on the display device, the array able to be narrowed or enhanced interactively as the ~~system~~ the interactive wizard guide gains input from the user.

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, wherein if the merchandize is clothing, the ~~system~~ the displaying means of the interactive wizard guide can display a plurality of ensembles of clothing for viewing by the user, each ensemble able to be altered with ensemble items moved from one ensemble to another, colors and patterns changed, and reassembled interactively, the ensembles able to be displayed using models and animation specified by the user.

18. (PREVIOUSLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 17, wherein the user can purchase an entire ensemble, or any part of the ensemble.

19. (ORIGINAL) The system according to Claim 16, wherein the user can specify additional desired matching items to be retrieved and displayed for viewing that may not be included in the array.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The system according to Claim 1, wherein the override means includes means to allow the user ~~can~~ to override a predetermined intelligence rule used by the system interactive wizard guide to make recommendations to the user.

21. (ORIGINAL) The system according to Claim 20, wherein the predetermined intelligence rules pertain to determining whether two colors match.